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W. F. Webb, a wealthy Englishman, to whom the missionary was kind and helpful. Mr. Webb and his accomplished wife were in time numbered among Livingstone's dearest friends, and it was in their home, in 1863-1864, that the explorer and his daughter Agnes spent eight of the happiest months of his life. This palatial home was Newstead Abbey, famous earlier as the home of Lord Byron. Here Livingstone lived on his second and last return to England while writing one of his books; and here were forged bonds of friendship that linked the Webb family with the explorer and with all men and things that were part and parcel of his subsequent career.

This book, written by one of the daughters of Mr. Webb, tells with tact and delicacy and with fine descriptive power, of phases of Livingstone, of his characteristics, his work; of his wife and children; of great men who came into his life like Murchison and Stanley; and of humble blacks like Susi and Chumah, whose names will live. No one could have written the book lacking the opportunities the author possessed even from childhood. All who love Livingstone for the gentle, great man he was and for the potent influence he still is in the uplifting of Africa will be glad to read this interesting and intimate account of some aspects of the man concerning which not much has been written.

Premier Voyage du Sieur de la Courbe fait à la Coste d'Afrique en 1685. Par P. Cultru. lviii and 319 pp. Map. *Soc. de l'Hist. des Colonies Françaises*. E. Larose, Paris, 1913. Fr. 12. 9½ x 6.

This is a story of adventure in an adventurous era which it must have been a joy to edit. M. Cultru had the rare good fortune to discover the manuscript which had remained unpublished for more than 200 years, half in the National Library in Paris among the forgotten loot of an ancient convent, the other half in the national archives among the unused débris and roughly assigned to the West Indies in a wrong classification. When the editor brought the two fragments together he found that except for sixteen pages at the beginning of the second fragment he had a most vivid narrative of the early commercial settlement of the region of the Senegal and Gambia Rivers. It abounds in interest, it reads with the life and spirit of Robinson Crusoe with only this difference, that Defoe was writing upon material derived from another and the vivacity of the tale shows his skill as a writer while La Courbe is writing at the first hand upon his own experiences. This volume will serve to correct the statements of Father Labat, for it is now discovered to be the source from which that fiery monk has drawn without credit. The Sieur de La Courbe writes with simple force in very direct statement and journalizes his daily life when upon that coast, not a philosopher of history but a shrewd observer with a decided gift for accuracy and a zeal to test what he sees and hears. He is altogether a credit to his profession of seafaring, a good merchant adventurer. We shall not be surprised if his narrative attains a wide currency when some general publisher discovers it and rescues it from the obscurity of the scientific auspices under which it has been brought to light. In an English translation it should prove very successful.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

ASIA

The Coal and Mineral Resources of Shansi Province, China.

Analytically examined by Erik T. Nyström. 97 pp. Map, ills. P. A. Norstedt & Söner, Stockholm, 1912. 9½ x 6½.

A further step in advance in our knowledge of China's vast coal resources. His own explorations and the facilities conferred by his position as head of the Faculty of Science at Shansi Univ. enabled Nyström to find that areas of anthracitic and bituminous coals are not so well defined as Richthofen had maintained. He points instead to regions of future yield as centering around Tse Chou and Ping Ting for anthracite, while bituminous coals are shown to spread widely in the northern and western sections of the province. As to their quality, the assays generally reveal higher ash content than in British coals.

The author also says that iron occurs frequently and that its quality lends

itself to easy treatment. The information on coal and iron is supplemented by that on various ores, so that the distribution of the mineral resources of the province is exhaustively indicated. In view of the large reserves, the province is destined to become eventually one of the world's most important mining regions.

Les Chemins de Fer de Chine. Par Edouard de Laboulaye. Préface de M. Robert de Caix. 340 pp. Map. Émile Larose, Paris, 1911. 9 x 5½.

In a preface which is truly introductory, M. de Caix points out how important it is to have works of this character to rescue the reading public from the news despatches of the press. It is a besetting sin of daily journalism, inherent in its quotidianism, that it supplies day by day all the information it can acquire and must trust to the interest of its readers to adjust these "kilometers of special despatches," as he designates them, to the real movement of daily history. This is particularly true of the news of the Middle Kingdom, a community in which fact is inextricably involved with unfamiliar canons of interpretation. In this volume M. de Laboulaye has established our knowledge of the railroad question of China upon a sound basis. After a concise history of the early attempts to introduce steam land communication in China, he takes up the discussion of each of the existing lines and of each of the projects which have shown viability. In each such unit of the theme he follows an excellent method: the history of the negotiations, the construction of the permanent way, the length of line in operation with all necessary details of equipment, the traffic handled, the extensions projected, and at the end the full text of the agreement with the Chinese government under which the road has been built and operated. The work is complete up to the beginning of the new Republic. In this newest era we note as supplementary information that one of the first acts of Yuan Shih-kai was to assign the whole railroad question to Sun Yat-sen. The latter seems to have done little with the project, and when he became engaged with the revolt of the southern provinces Yuan reclaimed the control of the railroad development plan into his own hands.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Old China and Young America. By Sarah Pike Conger. 160 pp. Ills. F. G. Browne & Co., Chicago, 1913. 75 cents. 7½ x 4½.

A half of this little volume contains the odds and ends of recollections of Chinese life which Mrs. Conger had not thought it necessary to include in her more serious record of her share in China when the Boxer riots imperilled life in the legations. These simple tales are addressed to children and in that fact lies their value for the student of the life of the Middle Kingdom. The best of us are but children when we come into touch with the ancient civilization of that oldest of human empires and youngest of republics. The simpler the tale which comes from the yamen and the temple the more we learn; even this modest book has that within it which will better our knowledge.

Sibirien. Eindrücke und Betrachtungen aus Natur und Politik. Von A. Stirne. vi and 116 pp. O. Wigand, Leipzig, 1912. Mk. 2.40. 8 x 5.

This little volume is a popular manual, a primer of Siberia. We can most readily comprehend its usefulness as the travel companion of those who make the long journey on the Trans-Siberian railroad; moreover, we recall few compendiums which contain anything like the amount of interesting and valuable information which is packed away in these pages. Under a series of concise statements of history and geography, through carefully selected massing of statistical information, the author has developed a central theme which may be described as the Revenge of Europe. Siberia was the home of some of those fierce hordes which once and again devastated Europe and fell little short of overthrowing its culture. Today it is the seat of the great movement backward of colonization which Russia is establishing toward the Pacific, a folk movement to which little attention has yet been given. The natural resources of the most prolific area of Asia are being exploited and there is arising a new and important market for the manufactured products of western Europe. Rus-